

Case 3269

Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*) Meigen, 1822 and *Rhamphomyia* (*Pararhamphomyia*) Frey, 1922 (Insecta, Diptera): proposed conservation of usage of the subgeneric names by designation of *Empis sulcata* Meigen, 1804 as the type species of *Rhamphomyia

Miroslav Barták

*Czech University of Agriculture, Department of Zoology & Fishery,
165 21 Praha 6, Czech Republic (e-mail: bartak@af.czu.cz)*

Bradley J. Sinclair

*Zoologisches Forschungsinstitut und Museum Alexander Koenig,
Adenauerallee 160, 53113 Bonn, Germany
(e-mail: b.sinclair.zfmk@uni-bonn.de)*

Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 70.2 of the Code, is to conserve the widespread usage of the subgeneric names *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*) Meigen, 1822 and *Rhamphomyia* (*Pararhamphomyia*) Frey, 1922 for groups of dance-flies (family EMPIDIDAE) by designating *Empis sulcata* Meigen, 1804 as the type species of *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*) Meigen, 1822. The valid type species is *Empis marginata* Fabricius, 1787. However, in 1834 Curtis invalidly designated *Empis sulcata* Meigen, 1804 as the type species and all subsequent authors have accepted this designation. Acceptance of the valid type species designation (*Empis marginata*) would destabilise the current usage of these subgeneric names and those of over 200 species currently included in these groups.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Diptera; EMPIDIDAE; *Rhamphomyia*; *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*) *marginata*; *Rhamphomyia* (*Pararhamphomyia*) *geniculata*; dance-flies.

1. Meigen (1822, p. 42) described the genus *Rhamphomyia* and included 37 species. No type species was designated at that time. Guérin in Bory de Saint-Vincent (1828, p. 547) subsequently designated *Empis marginata* Fabricius, 1787 (p. 364) as the type species for *Rhamphomyia*, and provided a description of the genus and the characters that distinguish this genus from related genera. All subsequent authors overlooked this publication and type species designation until Evenhuis (1994) showed that *Empis marginata* was the valid type species of *Rhamphomyia* (and hence *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*)).

2. Apparently unaware of the work of Guérin, Curtis (1834, pl. 517 and accompanying text) designated *Empis sulcata* Meigen, 1804 as the type species of *Rhamphomyia*. This action was followed by Coquillett (1903) in his list of genera of EMPIDIDAE, and then again in (1910) in his list of names of most genus-group taxa of North American Diptera. With the exception of Evenhuis (1994), *Empis sulcata* has been acknowledged to be the type species of *Rhamphomyia* in all publications (including all modern regional catalogues) subsequent to Coquillett (1903, 1910).

3. Currently, both *Empis sulcata* and *E. marginata* are assigned respectively to different subgenera: *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*) and *Rhamphomyia* (*Pararhamphomyia*) Frey, 1922 (p. 3). The type species by original designation (Frey, 1922, p. 33) of the subgenus *Rhamphomyia* (*Pararhamphomyia*) is *Empis plumipes* Fallén, 1816 (p. 25). This was a misidentification of *R. geniculata* Meigen, 1830 (p. 340; see Collin, 1961) and under Article 70.3.2 we herewith fix *R. geniculata* as the type species. The currently accepted subgeneric classification follows that of Collin (1961) with some comments by Barták (1981). Chvála & Wagner (1989) followed this classification for the 'Catalogue of Palearctic Diptera', where there are currently 110 species assigned to *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*) and 112 species assigned to *Rhamphomyia* (*Pararhamphomyia*).

4. There remains only a single specimen of the original type series of *Empis sulcata* (see Collin, 1961, p. 387; Barták, 1989, p. 5). Unfortunately, this is a female, which is indistinguishable from several closely related species. However, the species was redescribed by Collin (1961, p. 383) and Barták (1982, p. 412) and all subsequent workers have used the name *Empis sulcata* in their sense.

5. Replacement of the currently accepted type species of *Rhamphomyia* (*Rhamphomyia*), *Empis sulcata*, with the valid type species designation, *Empis marginata*, would result in many new combinations and would cause undue confusion and instability in the nomenclature and taxonomy of the EMPIDIDAE. Therefore, we propose that the type designation for *Rhamphomyia* made by Guérin (1828) be set aside and that *Empis sulcata* Meigen be designated as the type species following the action of Curtis (1834).

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to set aside all fixations of type species for the nominal genus *Rhamphomyia* Meigen, 1822 prior to the designation by Curtis (1834) of *Empis sulcata* Meigen, 1804;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *Rhamphomyia* Meigen, 1822 (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Curtis (1834) as ruled in (1) above *Empis sulcata* Meigen, 1822;
 - (b) *Pararhamphomyia* Frey, 1922 (gender: feminine), type species by original designation *Empis plumipes* Fallén, 1816 (a misidentification of *Rhamphomyia geniculata* Meigen, 1830, fixed as the type species by Barták & Sinclair (2003));
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *sulcata* Meigen, 1822, as published in the binomen *Empis sulcata* (specific name of the type species of *Rhamphomyia* Meigen, 1822);
 - (b) *geniculata* Meigen, 1830, as published in the binomen *Rhamphomyia geniculata* (specific name of the type species of *Pararhamphomyia* Frey, 1922).

Acknowledgements

We thank Drs M. Chvála (Prague), N.L. Evenhuis (Honolulu), N.D. Springate (London), and H. Ulrich (Bonn) for discussions concerning this application.

Drs A.C. Pont (Reading) and N. Springate kindly provided copies of Guérin's and Curtis's (1834) publications.

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Acknowledgement of receipt of this application was published in BZN **60**: 94.

Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk).